



CENTRE FOR POLICY ALTERNATIVES

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Centre for Policy Alternatives

Annual Report 2017

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Message from the Executive Director

The year 2017 was one of crossroads. The stresses and strains of coalition were increasingly apparent in the National Unity Government and as the country eventually moved towards local government elections in February 2018, the situation deteriorated. There was growing sense within the country of a lack of government leave aside governance, and of the imminent return of the Rajapaksas. The lack of movement in respect of the promises made in the January 2015, ran the risk of issues like constitutional reform and transitional justice being put on the backburner for the foreseeable future.

Against this background, CPA focused on keeping the issues of constitutional reform and transitional justice on the agenda of public policy reform and in the minds of the population at large. Consequently a number of workshops and other outreach activities were devoted to this. A publication edited by Senior Researcher Bhavani Fonseka on transitional justice with articles by local and international resource persons was published in 2017 as well as a new website on constitutional reform to complement the work of the Constitutional Assembly. Here too, with Research Fellow Asanga Welikala taking the lead, the articles are by eminent local and international resource persons. The seminal exhibition Corridors of Power, which charts the evolution of constitutional reform through 3D models was shown outside of Colombo and attracted viewers who are not usually associated with the topic. In both these areas, especially on transitional justice, policy briefs and easily accessible booklets were made available and opinion surveys conducted.

The year also marked the 150th anniversary of the tea industry. CPA chose to focus on the living conditions of the workers, with *Groundviews*, *Maatram* and *Vikalpa* taking the lead on this. Another important area of activity was outreach work on greater representation of women in elected office, particularly given the quota of 25% in the local government elections. CPA organised intensive discussions at the community level and focused group discussions of potential candidates to raise awareness of this important commitment and capacity build those who were willing to take it up. Seminal work continued on the voting rights of disabled persons. Work also continued on language rights with the first MOU signed with a government ministry – that of National Integration, Languages and Reconciliation – to monitor the effective implementation of the Official Languages Policy within government.

My thanks to all members of staff for their commitment throughout the year and my fervent hope that the reform agenda will be restored to the pivotal position it deserves. I hope and trust that CPA will continue to work to realise this agenda to make our country more decent, more compassionate and much better governed.

Dr. Paikiasothy Saravanamuttu

Executive Director

Message from the Chairperson

For more than two decades, the Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPA) has contributed to enhancing democracy, good governance and conflict transformation in Sri Lanka through cutting edge civic media initiatives, research and advocacy.

Throughout 2017 CPA made significant efforts through judicial interventions in Issues ranging from the protection of rights of the internally displaced to electoral democracy, the independence of the judiciary and public service, freedom of expression and provincial devolution, land, education and language rights. We continued our work on democracy, governance and women's political representation through discussions with hundreds of participants, interactive dialogues, awareness raising and signature campaigns.

CPA supports creative, innovative ideas to enhance public awareness. CPA continued with its path-breaking project initiated a few years ago, "Corridors of Power" exploring power dynamics through a range of visual and digital media.

We have implemented some highly successful and innovative programs aimed at the dissemination and advocacy of policy alternatives, produced reports, guides and working papers on governance, constitutional reform, right to information and transitional justice.

2017 was a critical year in which we sought to consolidate democratic gains while continuing our advocacy to strengthen and expedite the reform agenda for post conflict recovery and the protection of rights. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our courageous staff and partners for never failing to impress us with their creative spirit and the determination they bring to their work every day. I would also like to thank our dedicated Council for their guidance as well as their steadfast support and engagement to increase our impact. All this was possible also because of the support of our donors and I thank them for their generous contributions.

Dr. Chandraguptha Thenuwara

Chairperson

Introduction to CPA

Vision

A liberal, democratic Sri Lanka.

Mission

To strengthen the civil society contribution to public policy making through programmes of research and advocacy in the areas of democratic governance and peace with human rights as an overarching priority.

About the Centre for Policy Alternatives

The Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPA) was established in 1996 with the aim of strengthening institution and capacity-building for good governance and conflict transformation in Sri Lanka. For over 20 years, CPA has set the bar in Sri Lanka for how cutting-edge research and advocacy can be communicated through constructive dialogue and innovative content to address deficits in democracy and governance.

CPA works across four key units in two offices located in Colombo. The **Research & Advocacy** Team engages in critique and advocacy of policy alternatives through comprehensive field-based and applied research outputs and also leads CPA's public interest litigation efforts. The **Outreach Monitoring** Team works with local government and community based organisations on participatory governance, grassroots capacity building and service delivery, while working to generate mobilisation on social equality and reconciliation. **Social Indicator** is CPA's survey research unit and conducts public opinion polling on a wide range of social and political issues. The **Civic Media** Unit manages the award winning civic media initiatives *Maatram*, *Vikalpa* and *Groundviews* which seek to amplify narratives by citizens otherwise marginal to and erased from mainstream media. In addition, CPA hosts the **Centre for Monitoring Election Violence** (CMEV), the leading election monitoring and electoral reform advocacy organisation in Sri Lanka which promotes free and fair elections and inclusive democratic participation.

CPA works with a wide range of actors across Sri Lanka, from civil society organisations and community based activists, to students and academics, to provincial and local government officials. CPA also engages with numerous NGOs, civil society organisations and academics in the international sphere to share, collaborate on and learn from policy approaches to democratic governance and sustainable peace. CPA staff members are regularly quoted in media, both locally and internationally, for their expertise and insights. Institutional output in print and online in all three languages is regularly flagged and used in debates on domestic policy making and international discourse.

The Board of Directors

Professor Chandraguptha Thenuwara (Chairperson)

Senior Lecturer, Department of History & Art Theory, Faculty of Visual Arts, Colombo



Chandraguptha Thenuwara (BFA/MFA/MPhil) is a senior lecturer and head of the department of History and Art Theory at the University of the Visual and Performing Arts Colombo. Professor Thenuwara is a leading Sri Lankan artist and activist whose work focuses on issues surrounding the impact of conflict and politics on Sri Lanka.

He studied painting at the Institute of Aesthetic Studies, University of Kelaniya (1978-1981) and Surikov State Art Institute, Moscow, Russia (1985-1992); and received a MPhil at the Post Graduate Institute of Archeology (PGIAR), Kelaniya University (2006). In 1993, He founded the Vibhavi Academy of Fine Arts (VAFA), an artist-run alternative art school. Since 1978 he has exhibited widely in Sri Lanka and abroad. His works are also included in the collections of the Queensland Art Gallery Australia, Fukuoka Asian Art Museum Japan, John Moore's University Art Collection Liverpool and Fine Arts Museum of Udmurtia, Izhevsk, Russia. His public monuments include the Monument to the Disappeared in Seeduwa and the Monument to Neelan Tiruchelvam at Kynsey Terrace, Colombo.

Jeanne Samuel

Humanitarian Aid and Development Professional

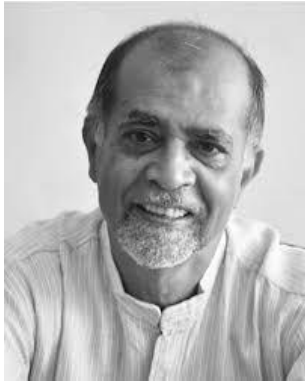
Jeanne has worked in the humanitarian aid and development sector in Sri Lanka and Vietnam over the past 30 years where she held senior management positions with local and international NGOs, bilateral aid agencies and the UN. She graduated at the London South Bank University, UK in Applied Biology and has a Master's degree in Conflict, Security and Development from the University of Bradford, UK.



She has spent her working life with persons with disabilities, children, people affected by armed conflict, internally displaced persons, and women headed-households; in addition to working on the community development, livelihood initiatives and building capacities of local grassroots organisations. She has worked as Consultant to the Asia Foundation on the implementation of the National Language Policy in Sri Lanka and also served as a Consultant to the USAID funded SPICE Project. She is presently a Consultant to the Centre for the Handicapped in Kandy and a Trustee on The Board of Trustees of the Neelan Tiruchelvam Trust.

Professor Jayadeva Uyangoda

Professor of Political Science (Retired), Founding Member



Jayadeva Uyangoda is a leading researcher and commentator on contemporary Sri Lankan politics. He recently retired as Senior Professor of Political Science, University of Colombo, and currently serves as Emeritus Professor at the University of Colombo. During August 2016-July 2017, he held the Rajni Kothari Chair in Democracy at the Center for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS), New Delhi. Some of Professor Uyangoda's major writings have been on themes relating to Sri Lanka's ethnic conflict, its peace processes and its democracy. He has also been a lead researcher in the research program "The State of Democracy in South Asia", coordinated by the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS), New Delhi.

Aritha Wickramasinghe

Lawyer and Activist

Aritha is an international banking lawyer, a founding trustee of the global education initiative Think Equal and the Equality Director at iProbono. He was formerly a lawyer at prestigious international firms Clifford Chance and K&L Gates in London and also worked in the Chambers at the UN International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda in Tanzania, where he worked on the Military 1 and Karera cases.



Aritha is a strong advocate of diversity and inclusion. He has advised various Governments and UN agencies on education and economic reform and human rights. He also led a successful challenge against the UK Government to recognise the identity of non-gendered persons. For his work, Aritha was ranked the No. 1 Future Leader by the Financial Times in their 2015 OUTstanding List.

Aritha has a BA in Political Science with Sociology, and a Graduate Diploma in Law with a Commendation (Ranking 1) from the University of Birmingham, UK; and a Master of Laws (LLM) from the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), University of London. He is a qualified practising Solicitor in the UK.

Dr. Paikiasothy Saravanamuttu

Executive Director



Dr. Paikiasothy Saravanamuttu is the founder and Executive Director of the Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPA). He is also currently a member of the Foreign Policy Advisory Group and the Board of the Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute for International and Strategic Studies.

Dr. Saravanamuttu has extensive experience with civil society in Sri Lanka. He is a founder director of the Sri Lanka chapter of Transparency International; a founding co-convener of the Centre for Monitoring Election Violence (CMEV); and the civil society alliance the Platform for Freedom. In 2004 he was an Eisenhower Fellow and he is currently Chairperson of the Eisenhower Fellows, Sri Lanka. He is also a Member of the Gratiaen Trust and the Regional Advisory Group of Amnesty International for Asia. In 2016, he was appointed the Secretary of the Task Force on Consultations on Mechanisms for Reconciliation (CTF) and in 2017 and short-listed for the Peace Prize awarded by the city of Ypres, Belgium.

Dr. Saravanamuttu received a BSc Econ. and a PhD in International Relations from the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), University of London, in 1979 and 1986, respectively. He lectured in International Politics at the University of Southampton, UK from 1984-92. He has presented numerous papers on governance and peace in Sri Lanka at a variety of international conferences and is widely quoted in the international and local media.

2017 in Review

Public Interest Litigation

CPA's public interest litigation efforts over 2017 covered a wide range of issues the organisation has engaged in advocacy on a longstanding basis:

Devolution and Electoral Rights

The Centre for Policy Alternatives vs. Attorney-General, SC SD 24/2017 [In re the Twentieth Amendment to the Constitution] – CPA and its Executive Director filed a [Petition](#) on 28th August 2017 in the Supreme Court challenging the Bill titled 'The Twentieth Amendment to the Constitution' which sought to hold elections for all Provincial Councils on the same day. CPA's challenge was based on the views of the Provincial Councils not being sought before the Bill was tabled; for cutting short the terms of some Provincial Councils and for delaying elections in others. This challenge was based on CPA's long running advocacy of devolution in Sri Lanka and the rights of Provincial Councils, as well as its long-standing commitment to the franchise of Sri Lankans at all levels of governance.

Links: [CPA Press Release, Daily News](#) (26/08/2017), [Daily FT](#) (07/09/2017), [Daily News](#) (07/09/2017) [Daily News](#) (09/09/2017)

Education Rights

A.M.D.M Adasuriya vs. Malin Perera, OIC Slave Island, Police Station (SC FR 192/2014) and W.N.S Ranathunge & 11 others (SC FR 193/2014) – CPA supported filing two fundamental rights applications in July 2014. In one, the petitioner was a student of the University of Peradeniya who, along with fellow students and six other Universities (Colombo, Jayawardenapura, Ruhuna, Jaffna and Eastern Province), staged peaceful protest campaigns all over the country, pursuant to a decision of the University Grants Commission, that the duration of the degrees they were following was reduced to a three year degree. CPA's litigation is part of its advocacy on education rights. The judgment on the case is pending.

Land Rights

Arunasalam Kunabalasingham and 1473 others vs. A. Sivaswamy and 2 others (CA (Writ) 125/2013) – CPA supported filing a writ application on 15th May 2013 on behalf of Petitioners who were owners of land located in the Northern Province in the High Security zone. The case was filed to challenge moves by the government to take over traditional lands constituting approximately 6381 acres for a purported public purpose. The reason for the supposed land acquisition as per the notices issued was to establish a 'Defence Battalion Headquarters'. CPA's litigation here is part of its longstanding land rights advocacy, particularly for landowners in the North and East who face

ongoing difficulties regaining land from the state following the armed conflict, and preventing land from further takeovers. The case is still pending.



Photo taken at the protest by citizens of Keppapilavu, for the return of their lands over which a security forces headquarter has been built. Read more [here](#).

Maheshwary Thambirajah and 4 others vs. W. Waragoda and 6 others (CA (Writ) 376/2014) – CPA supported filing a writ application on 30th October 2014 for Petitioners who are landowners of land located in Eluthumaduvil in the district of Jaffna. The case challenged the steps taken by the government to take over their lands constituting approximately 52 acres for the purported public purpose of establishing a ‘training school under 52nd Brigade Headquarters’. The case is still pending.

Language Rights

The Centre for Policy Alternatives vs National Medicines Regulatory Authority & 6 others – SPFR 102/2016

CPA’s Lionel Guruge filed a fundamental rights petition on 21st March 2016 seeking an order directing health authorities to ensure all labels and packaging containing information pertaining to medicines, medical devices and products are in Sinhala and Tamil, as the official languages of Sri Lanka. The challenge asserted that effective access to medicine and medical services required the proper administration of language rights in parallel – current practices of labelling in only English violates language rights. This litigation was advanced following previous complaints made by CPA on the same matter to the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka. The case is ongoing.

Links: [Sunday Times](#) (15/01/2017), [Language Rights Advocacy by CPA](#)

Rights of Detainees

The Centre for Policy Alternatives vs. Attorney-General (SC SD 7/2017) – CPA and its Executive Director filed a Petition on 31 May 2017 challenging the constitutionality of two provisions of the Code of Criminal Procedure (Special Provisions) Act No 2 of 2013 (Amendment) Bill, which sought, among other things, to allow Officers in Charge of Police stations to deny lawyers from accessing detainees and Police stations if such access impacted investigations being conducted. CPA argued that the Bill violated the rights of persons in custody including effective access to legal representation, which could lead to the violating of further rights such the right not to be tortured. Through the course of the litigation, the Government gave an undertaking to withdraw the Bill.

Links: CPA Press Releases [1](#) and [2](#), [Daily FT](#) (07/06/2017), [Daily News](#) (07/06/2017), [Asian Mirror](#) (07/06/2017)

Land and Housing Rights Advocacy

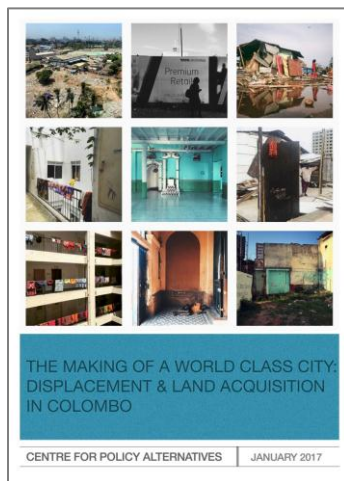
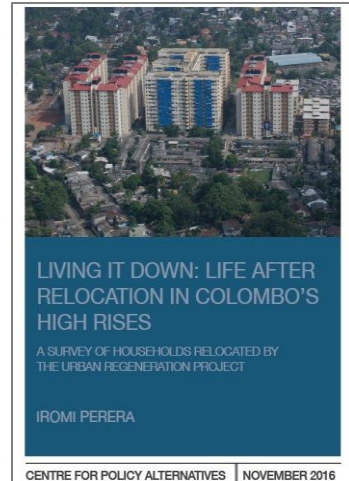
As part of CPA's extensive work on land and housing rights in Sri Lanka, the organisation has for years documented the stories of people affected by the rapid development drive that occurred under the Rajapaksa administration, when the Urban Development Authority commandeered evictions across Colombo to make room for what has materialised as mixed development projects for the wealthy. As a consolidation of this work, CPA launched a number of reports and narratives on post-war urban development in Colombo in February 2017.



Source: World Class Spaces

Living it down: Life After Relocation in Colombo's High Rises

Based on findings of a survey conducted with 1,222 households in Colombo forcibly relocated by the Rajapaksa regime to “liberate” commercially valuable property in Colombo by relocating communities to high-rise complexes in the North of Colombo since 2010. The report raises many concerns about the future of those living in the UDA high-rise complexes. It demands a complete review of the Urban Regeneration Project as well as a broad move away from an approach that views people, especially the working class poor, as impediments to adding social and economic value to the city. The full report is available [here](#).

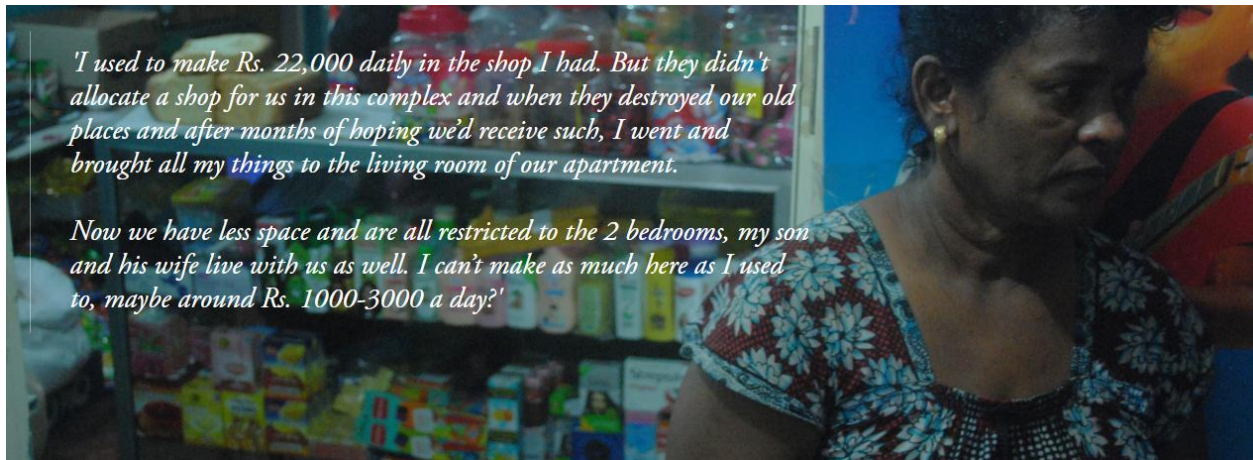


The Making of a World Class City: Displacement and Land Acquisition in Colombo

The report looks at urban development under the yahapalanaya government and raises serious questions about continuity of relocations of communities to high-rise apartments, ongoing acquisition of land for development projects and concerns regarding rights, transparency and entitlements going forward. The report highlights numerous problems with a lack of transparency and accountability, violations of language rights and deliberate obstructions in obtaining information and services to residents. The report also highlights the urgent need for the National Involuntary Resettlement Policy to be updated and enshrined in law. The full report is available [here](#).

Rising Above – Life, Family and Hope at Methsara Uyana

To mark International Women’s Day on March 8th, CPA highlighted the multi-faceted nature of the issues faced by women in urban contexts. It focused on the women in inner city communities who are most affected through forced relocations, as they have lost the ability to carry out their informal income-generating activities, in addition to taking care of their children in an unfamiliar and even unwelcoming residence.



'I used to make Rs. 22,000 daily in the shop I had. But they didn't allocate a shop for us in this complex and when they destroyed our old places and after months of hoping we'd receive such, I went and brought all my things to the living room of our apartment.

Now we have less space and are all restricted to the 2 bedrooms, my son and his wife live with us as well. I can't make as much here as I used to, maybe around Rs. 1000-3000 a day?'

Behind the scenes: The making of luxury spaces in Colombo

Amidst the spate of evictions and involuntary relocations from 2013-2014 by the Ministry of Defence and Urban Development, the community at Station Passage was frequently highlighted as one having a positive experience, owing to plans for new apartments to be built for residents beside their existing properties and due to their positive dialogue with the UDA. This feature interrogates their experience and how by 2016 the community's new apartments were yet to be completed unlike the luxury mall whose construction was forcing their eviction. The feature can be accessed [here](#).

Democracy, Governance and Women's Political Representation

Following the institution of the 25% Women's Quota to Strengthen the Participation of Women in Politics at the Local level, CPA initiated a project from June 2016 to June 2017 covering 13 districts in the Southern, Uva, Eastern and Northern Provinces consisting of three phases:

Intensive Discussions Exercise – 26 intensive discussions with over 700 participants were conducted on issues and concerns inhibiting greater women's participation. The intensive discussion series was held with the direct and constructive engagement with local authorities, district secretariats and government officials such as Women Development Officers attached to the Ministry of Women and Child Affairs.

Interactive Dialogues – 13 Interactive dialogues with over 800 potential candidates was conducted with Political Party officials, ministers and MPs, the Parliamentary Women's Caucus, Minister for Women and Child Affairs, Minister of Provincial Councils and Local Government and Chairperson of the National Women's Committee.

Awareness and Signature Campaign – Further identifying the need to educate local women, CPA conducted this campaign in four Provinces over a month from January to February 2017, in collaboration with the Ministry of Provincial Councils and Local Government. The Campaign was kickstarted by the Minister of Provincial Councils and Local Government, Mr. Faiser Mustapha, followed by the Ambassadors of Germany and the Netherlands. The Campaign obtained a total of 7,367 signatures and 147 suggestions, and distributed 11,000 leaflets in Sinhala and Tamil across the 13 districts.

Media: [Daily News](#) (18/01/2017), [Conference Clip](#), [CPA Press Release](#)

Campaign Resources: [Website](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#)



Campaign launch with the participation of Hon. Minister Faiser Mustapha (far right), Minister of Provincial Councils and Local Government, and Ms. Gayani Premathilake (far left), Legal Officer of the Ministry of Provincial Councils and Local Government

Constitutional Reform

Citizen Engagement Initiatives in Constitutional Reform

CPA aimed to enhance public awareness on the latest developments on a new Constitution for Sri Lanka. A number of initiatives were taken to galvanise citizens to engage in the process targeting all the members of public with a focus on youth and civil society organisations. CPA had begun its public engagement exercises on Constitutional Reform in 2015, and continued with them throughout 2017. Event and workshop locations included Colombo, Jaffna and Batticaloa, and engaged a variety of citizens from university students to community level activists.

Media: [Daily FT](#) (01/07/2017), [Daily FT](#) (19/07/2017)

Two Years In Government

CPA produced this report in February 2017 comprehensively exploring the pledges made by the government in the areas of constitutional reform, governance and transitional justice and examining progress made, challenges and setbacks. The report takes stock of slowing pace and stagnation of the government's reform agenda and interrogates the Government's ability and willingness to see the agenda implemented fully. A copy of the report can be found [here](#).

Corridors of Power



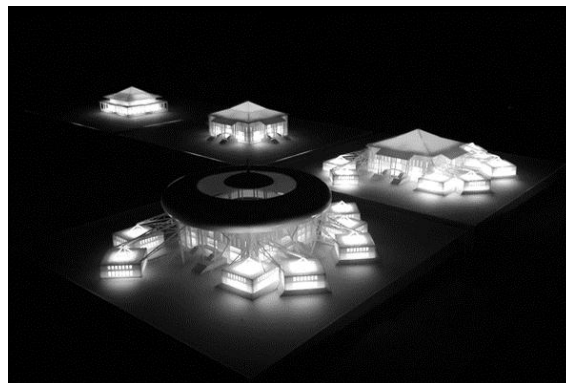
"Corridors of Power" is a path-breaking project marrying constitutional reform and theory with architecture, exploring the power dynamics enshrined in Sri Lanka's various Constitutional "moments" through a range of visual and digital media.

In 2017, CPA launched the website for "Corridors of Power" which provides an interactive presentation of the project. CPA also continued exhibiting the project across the country, holding exhibitions in Kurunegala and Batticaloa, featuring large format drawings, 3D

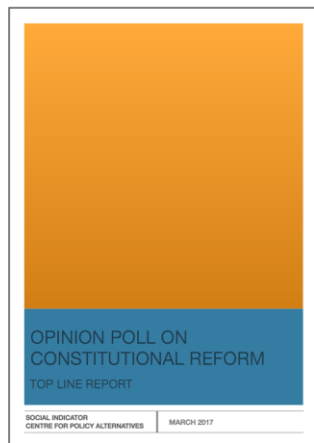
structures, sketches, and models. Participants, particularly students, were extremely engaged and expressed motivation to be more involved in the ongoing Constitutional Reform process.

"Corridors of Power" was a [finalist](#) in the first-ever World Changing Ideas Awards curated by Fast Company in 2017. As noted by them, the judges "sifted through more than 1,000 truly impressive entries to find the ones ... that were the best combination of creative problem solving and potential to change our world for the better."

The dedicated website can be accessed [here](#).



Public Opinion Survey on Constitutional Reform



CPA conducted a survey in March 2017 to assess various ideas and proposals that were being put forward and discussed by the Constitutional Assembly, various subcommittees and the Steering Committee at the time. The survey was conducted with 1,992 respondents in both Sinhala and Tamil languages across the 25 districts. [The Top line Report](#) depicting the survey findings and analysis was published in April 2017. The Report allowed a better understanding of public perception of the constitutional reform process including shifts in opinion and key areas the Government needs to address going forward. [Data visuals](#) representing the data gathered from the survey were also published online in the form of infographics.

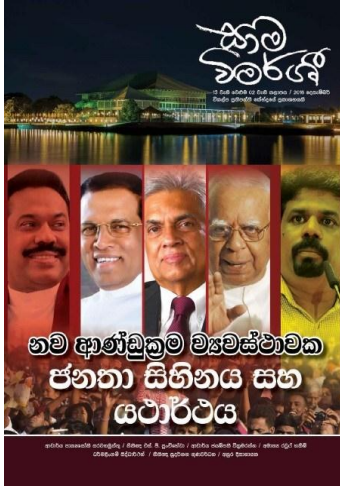
Media: [LankaBusinessOnline](#) (03/04/2017), [ColomboPage](#) (03/04/2017), [NewsFirst](#) (03/04/2017)

CPA Working Papers on Constitutional Reform

During 2017 CPA published seven more Working Papers in its [ongoing series](#) of academic publications on constitutional reform:

- Daniel Antonio García-Huerta – [A Constitution for Human Rights: Between Abstract Principles And Social Transformation](#)
- Asanga Welikala – [The Case against Constitutionalising Justiciable Socioeconomic Rights In Sri Lanka](#)
- Dr. Nihal Jayawickrama – [Establishing A Constitutional Court the Impediments Ahead](#)
- Asanga Welikala – [The Idea of Constitutional Incrementalism](#)
- Tom Gerald Daly – [A Constitutional Court for Sri Lanka? Perceptions, Potential & Pitfalls](#)
- Kåre Vollan and Luwie Ganeshathasan – [A System of Electoral Representation For Sri Lanka: The Principles Behind The Choice](#)
- Rohan Edrisinha – [Representative Democracy and the Role of the Member of Parliament](#)
- Asanga Welikala – [‘Specialist in Omniscience’? Nationalism, Constitutionalism and Sir Ivor Jennings’ Engagement with Ceylon](#)





Saama Vimarshi Magazine (Vol 12, Issue 1) – The latest issue of CPA’s long running in depth and analytical periodical on current political affairs, this special issue was titled *“The New Constitution- People’s Dreams and Reality”*. It sought to contribute to increased awareness and capacity among readers to engage in discourse on the current political situations covered in the magazine.

Right to Information

CPA has been at the forefront of advocacy for the right to information for over 15 years, helping draft earlier versions of RTI legislation and being involved in the advocacy and public awareness efforts for the current RTI Act which was passed in 2016 and came into operation in early 2017.

Public Advocacy

Throughout 2017, CPA conducted over 25 workshops across the island to inform citizens about the RTI regime and build their capacities to use it to resolve problems in their daily lives as well as to advance the public interest. The workshops reached thousands of citizens and addressed issues pertaining to language, lands and receiving correspondence addresses (in the plantation sector) among others. CPA continues to work on creating a more integrated and a responsive network at the grassroots level by promoting the course of RTI awareness raising among newly appointed local governance representatives, public servants at local level and civic activists.

Right to Information Research

CPA was commissioned by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to conduct a mapping and review of legislation conflicting with Sri Lanka’s RTI legal regime. This comprehensive review identified numerous pieces of legislation that conflict with the newly implemented RTI regime. It also reviewed the state of RTI jurisprudence in Sri Lanka and potential challenges for the judiciary when cases relating to RTI appear before it. The report has been received by the Ministry of Mass Media and Communications, the nodal ministry for RTI. A copy of the publication can be found [here](#).

Public Interest Media Reporting

CPA's trilingual civic media platforms – *Groundviews*, *Vikalpa* and *Maatram* – used the RTI Act to expose government wrongdoing in a number of high profile incidents, including [the blocking of numerous websites](#) by the Telecommunications Regulatory Commission on the instruction of the Presidential Secretariat; the [negligent inaction of numerous public authorities](#) in the lead-up to the Meethotamulla garbage dump collapse tragedy; and [government takeovers of private land](#) in the Northern Province. These exposes underlined how the media can use the RTI regime in the public interest and pointed out serious shortcomings in public authorities' responses to information requests.

Transitional Justice

Throughout 2017, CPA was engaged in a number of important ways to ensure the government adhered to its commitments on transitional justice and to fill key gaps in public knowledge of transitional justice processes.

Consultation Task Force on Reconciliation Mechanisms (CTF)

CPA engaged extensively with the CTF process. Its Executive Director Dr. Paikiasothy Saravanamuttu served as the Secretary on the CTF and CPA itself was involved in monitoring the consultations across the country, and further in making submissions itself. Following the release of the CTF Report in early 2017, CPA produced a guide in May which attempts to capture key recommendations in the CTF Report and mark ways forward for transitional justice and reconciliation in Sri Lanka. A copy of the guide can be found [here](#).

Media: [CPA Video](#) on CTF Report, [Comments](#) by Dr. Saravanamuttu on the CTF Report, [Comments](#) by Bhavani Fonseka on the CTF Report

[Frontpage.lk](#) (06/01/2017), [Daily News](#) (06/01/2017), [Scroll.in](#) (09/01/2017)

[Huffington Post](#) interview with Dr. Saravanamuttu (15/01/2017), [Channel Eye](#) interview with Bhavani Fonseka (06/20/2017)

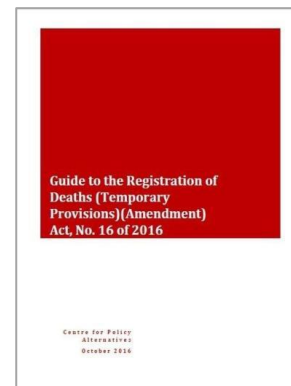
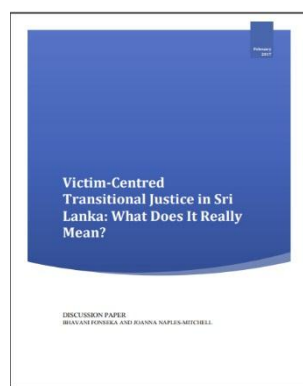
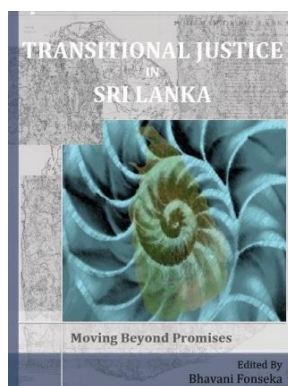
Missing Persons and Enforced Disappearances

CPA continued to push strongly for the immediate operationalisation of the Office of Missing Persons (OMP), which despite being legislated for in 2016, faced numerous delays in being set up. The OMP was finally constituted at the end of 2017 to begin its work in the following year.

Media: [News First](#) interview with Bhavani Fonseka (28/07/2017), [CPA Press Release](#) (01/06/2017)

Basic Guide to the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance Bill – CPA produced this guide in May 2017 on legislation which sought to give domestic effect to the international convention which Sri Lanka signed in 2015. The guide informs stakeholders in the process about what the Bill proposes. It was disseminated widely to ministers, legislators, civil society organisations and INGOs. A copy of the guide can be found [here](#).

‘They Promised Us Answers’: Justice delayed for the disappeared – CPA produced this feature which follows on from CPA’s extensive work on the topic of enforced disappearances. It is compiled of interviews and photos from several protests across the Northern Province demanding justice by way of the return of family members and children who are among the disappeared. The feature can be accessed [here](#).



Transitional Justice in Sri Lanka: Moving Beyond Promises

Edited by CPA senior researcher Bhavani Fonseka, this is the first publication focusing solely on transitional justice in Sri Lanka and encompasses several chapters reflecting on Sri Lanka’s own experiences as well as lessons from comparative contexts. The book is a rich resource of ideas and alternatives for Sri Lanka’s transitional justice process.

Guide on the Certificates of Absence (COA) – The proposal for COAs was initially promoted by CPA in 2015; its advocacy led to the enactment of the Registration of Deaths (Temporary Provisions) (Amendment) Act in 2016 following which COAs could be issued for identified categories of missing persons. CPA published this guide on COAs in 2016 and again in 2017 to raise awareness and highlight the issues concerning the operation of the COA regime. The guides were printed in all three languages and disseminated to MPs, policy makers, embassies, civil society organisations and INGOs. A copy of the guide can be found [here](#).

Victim-Centred Transitional Justice in Sri Lanka: What Does It Really Mean? – CPA produced this discussion paper in February 2017 to provide clarification on victim-centred transitional justice within the Sri Lankan context, exploring both the genealogy of it and models for implementation. CPA believes this to be an important conversation in the context of the government’s promises to

introduce new mechanisms and initiatives to address past abuses. A copy of the discussion paper can be found [here](#).

Glossary of Terms in Transitional Justice – This glossary maps out specific transitional justice terms and phrases in both Sinhala and Tamil for use by affected persons, policymakers, civil society and practitioners. The Glossary can be accessed [here](#).

Language Rights

CPA has continuously advocated state institutions to implement national language policies and ensure equal language rights to all Sri Lankans. To date CPA-led initiatives have submitted over 17,000 complaints to local institutions and independent Commissions and advanced litigation on language rights. This advocacy has secured some important victories, including ensuring trilingual printings of legislation; trilingual transport notices and announcements; trilingual documentation by finance companies; and undertakings to provide trilingual labelling of consumer and medical products. 2017 continued to build on these advances.

Audit of Language Rights in Central Government Institutions

CPA carried out a comprehensive assessment of language policies in practice at government institutions and their actual adherence to the Official Language Policy (OLP). It was also accompanied by a series of awareness raising workshops on language policies and their legal requirements targeted at civic activists at district level. Based on the findings, a set of recommendations were presented to all 49 ministries in order to expedite the effective implementation of the OLP and create systematic institutional change.

The full report can be accessed [here](#).

Media: [CPA Press Release](#), [Daily News](#) (07/08/2017), [Tamil Mirror](#) (13/11/2017)



Executive Director of CPA Dr. Saravanamuttu signing the MOU with Ranjith Uyangoda, Secretary at the then Ministry of National Integration, Reconciliation and Official Languages.

Civic Media

CPA's Civic Media Team is a network of civic media platforms: *Groundviews* in English, *Vikalpa* in Sinhala and *Maatram* in Tamil. The team uses a range of genres and media to highlight alternative perspectives on governance, human rights, hate speech, peace-building and other issues often not covered in mainstream media, particularly targeting the 18-34 year old demographic. Collectively, the sites have over 57,000 followers on Facebook, over 70,000 followers on Twitter and over 1,500 followers on Instagram, while its WhatsApp groups collectively have over 500 participants. The work of the Civic Media Team is followed by key opinion and policymakers locally and internationally and is often re-published on mainstream media. The Civic Media Team covered a number of important issues and stories which gained wide traction in 2017.

The Story of Tea

August 2017 marked 150 years of tea production in Sri Lanka which was marked by numerous celebratory activities and events which received wide media attention. In comparison, there was little mention of the tea plantation workers without whose contribution the industry would not exist. With this in mind, *Groundviews*, *Maatram* and *Vikalpa* created a series of features aimed at raising awareness around the hardships faced by plantation workers and their families. These features can be accessed [here](#) and [here](#).

Drought

The country's rice harvest has been halved by the ongoing drought, the worst on record in 40 years, with countless in need of food aid and life-saving support. In comparison to coverage of the 2016 and 2017 floods, mainstream media reporting and public attention on the drought is substantively poorer. *Groundviews'* [reporting on affected communities](#) on two corners of the island generated awareness of an issue that has remained far from the public discourse.



Possessions of missing persons, lovingly kept by family members who wait in vain for their return. See photo story [here](#)

Free and Fair Elections and Electoral Reform

Regulating Campaign Finances



CMEV alongside International IDEA and Transparency International led a series of discussions on the challenge of regulating campaign finances. These were held in 12 districts and participants included key institutions such as the Election Commission, the Commission to Investigate Allegations of Bribery or Corruption and the Inland Revenue Department. Parallel discussions moderated by CMEV and other civil society members were held in Parliament for MPs. The discussions concluded with an agreement by all stakeholders to put in place an appropriate framework before the next round of national elections. Further to this, CMEV worked with other civil society organisations to draft a Bill to regulate election campaign finances, which was handed over to the government. CMEV also

published an information pamphlet on campaign finance reform in collaboration with Transparency International, which can be found [here](#). Media: [Daily News](#) (08/08/2017)

Electoral Rights of Persons with Disabilities

CMEV led a number of initiatives to empower disabled persons' organisations to fully realise their electoral rights, with special emphasis creating an inclusive discourse with full participation by persons with disabilities. These initiatives included [consultative discussions](#) with the Election Commission and FRIDSRO, alongside disabled persons' organisations from various Provinces.



Holding Timely Elections



CMEV continued to advocate for overdue elections for a number of Provincial Councils and engaged with authorities on enacting changes to legislative and operational settings required to hold the elections. CMEV was insistent on the need to hold the elections in a timely manner to ensure people's voting rights.

Media: [Daily Mirror](#) (22/08/2017)

CPA in the Media

International

[Adopt Task Force's Justice Proposals](#) (Human Rights Watch)
[Aluthgama riots: Social media breaks SL media's shameful silence](#) (Firstpost.com)
[Enforced Disappearances in Sri Lanka](#) (Sangam.org)
[Linguistic slights spur ethnic division in Sri Lanka](#) (*The Economist*)
[Sri Lanka counts high cost of war and peace](#) (*Financial Times*)
[Sri Lanka task force seeks 'hybrid' war crimes court](#) (*The Hindu*)
[Sri Lanka's New Right to Information Law Could Save Lives](#) (Open Society Foundation)
[Sri Lankan President reportedly pledges to look for missing persons from civil war, release list](#) (*ABC News*)
[Sri Lankan President signs Office on Missing Persons Act](#) (NewIndianExpress.com)
[Tamil women continue protest in Sri Lanka](#) (*ABC News*)

Local

[A significant step](#) (*Daily News Editorial*)
[CPA Raises 'Serious Concerns' Over Wijeydasa Rajapakse Comments on Lakshan Dias](#) (*Asian Mirror*)
[CPA Welcomes Decision to Withdraw Code of Criminal Procedure \(Special Provisions\) Act \(Amendment\) Bill](#) (*Asian Mirror*)
[Going up in life or coming down?](#) (*Sunday Times*)
[Government to withdraw Code of Criminal Procedure \(Special Provisions\) Bill](#) (*Daily FT*)
[Hybrid court for war crimes vital - Paikiasothy Saravanamuttu](#) (Frontpage.lk)
[Language Equality: A road to reconciliation](#) (*Daily News*)
[SL's women representation lowest in Asian region: Dr. Saravanamuttu](#) (*Daily News*)
[Sri Lankans misunderstand the relationship between legal theory and political practice](#) (*Daily Mirror*)
[Technology and the Right to Information](#) (*The Island*)
[The Meethotamulla tragedy: The face, not failure, of development](#) (*Daily FT*)
[Will OMP ensure justice?](#) (*Daily Mirror*)

Financial Statements



Ernst & Young
Chartered Accountants
201 De Saram Place
P.O. Box 101
Colombo 10
Sri Lanka

Tel : +94 11 2463500
Fax Gen : +94 11 2697369
Tax : +94 11 5578180
eysl@lk.ey.com
ey.com

APAG/ADK/TW

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF CENTRE FOR POLICY ALTERNATIVES (GUARANTEE) LTD

Report on the Financial Statements

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Centre for Policy Alternatives (Guarantee) Ltd, ("the Company"), which comprise the statement of financial position as at 31 December 2017, and the statement comprehensive income, statement of changes in reserves and, statement of cash flow for the year then ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

Board's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

The Board of Directors ("Board") is responsible for the preparation of these financial statements that give a true and fair view in accordance with the Sri Lanka Statement of Recommended Practice for Not-for-Profit Organizations (Including Non-Governmental Organisation) (SL SoRP-NPO's [including NGO's]) issued by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Sri Lanka, and for such internal controls as Board determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Sri Lanka Auditing Standards. Those standards require that we comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation of the financial statements that give a true and fair view in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by Board, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for basis for our audit opinion.

(Contd...2/)

Partners: W R H Fernando FCA FCMA M P D Cooray FCA FCMA R N de Saram ACA FCMA Ms. N A De Silva FCA Ms. Y A De Silva FCA W K B S P Fernando FCA FCMA
Ms. K R M Fernando FCA ACMA Ms. L K H L Fonseka FCA A P A Gunasekera FCA FCMA A Herath FCA D K Hulangamuwa FCA FCMA LLB (Lond) H M A Jayasinghe FCA FCMA
Ms. A A Ludowyke FCA FCMA Ms. G G S Manatunga FCA Ms. P V K N Sajeewani FCA N M Sulaiman ACA ACMA B E Wijesuriya FCA FCMA
Principal T P M Ruberu FCMA FCCA

A member firm of Ernst & Young Global Limited



Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Company as at 31 December 2017, and of its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the Sri Lanka Statement of Recommended Practice for Not-for-Profit Organizations (Including Non-Governmental Organisation) (SL SoRP-NPO's [including NGO's]) issued by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Sri Lanka).

Report on other legal and regulatory requirements

As required by Section 163(2) of the Companies Act No. 7 of 2007, we state the following:

- a) The basis of opinion and Scope and Limitations of the audit are as stated above.
- b) In our opinion :
 - we have obtained all the information and explanations that were required for the audit and, as far as appears from our examination, proper accounting records have been kept by the Company,
 - the financial statements of the Company, comply with the requirements of Section 151 of the Companies Act No. 7 of 2007

05 October 2018
Colombo

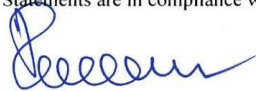
Centre for Policy Alternatives (Guarantee) Ltd

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

As at 31 December 2017

	Notes	2017 Rs.	2016 Rs.
ASSETS			
Non Current Assets			
Property Plant and Equipment	6	4,231,803	5,230,198
		<u>4,231,803</u>	<u>5,230,198</u>
Current Assets			
Receivables	7	10,741,766	22,625,225
Short Term Investments	8	34,467,902	30,668,930
Cash and Bank Balances	17	4,052,687	8,315,583
		<u>49,262,355</u>	<u>61,609,738</u>
Total Assets		<u>53,494,158</u>	<u>66,839,936</u>
FUNDING AND LIABILITIES			
Accumulated Funds			
Unrestricted Funds	10	(11,438,432)	(11,896,630)
Restricted Funds	11	34,952,003	45,488,953
Capital Reserve		11,708,591	14,602,004
		<u>35,222,162</u>	<u>48,194,327</u>
Non Current Liabilities			
Retirement Benefit Liability	12	11,983,300	11,168,250
		<u>11,983,300</u>	<u>11,168,250</u>
Current Liabilities			
Payables	9	4,728,610	4,773,947
Tax Payable		202,001	523,310
Bank Overdrafts	17	1,358,085	2,180,102
		<u>6,288,696</u>	<u>7,477,359</u>
Total Equity & Liabilities		<u>53,494,158</u>	<u>66,839,936</u>

These Financial Statements are in compliance with the requirements of the Companies Act No : 07 of 2007.



Finance Manager

The Board of Directors are responsible for these Financial Statements. Signed for and on behalf of the Board by:

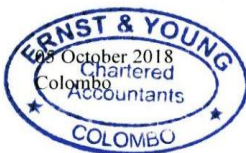


Director



Director

The accounting policies and notes on pages 07 through 20 form an integral part of the Financial Statements.



Centre for Policy Alternatives (Guarantee) Ltd
STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
Year ended 31 December 2017

	Notes	2017 Rs.	2016 Rs.
Incoming Resources	3	<u>98,095,045</u>	<u>162,765,393</u>
Project Expenditure	4		
Staff Costs		31,359,482	32,955,237
Other Direct Costs		35,158,788	80,686,412
Other Indirect Expenditure		<u>31,576,775</u>	<u>38,304,426</u>
Total Project Cost		<u>98,095,045</u>	<u>151,946,075</u>
Net Surplus on Projects		-	10,819,318
Revenue Earned from Other Activities	13	5,595,272	4,000,826
Administrative Expenses	14	(7,283,064)	(8,024,918)
		<u>(1,687,792)</u>	<u>6,795,226</u>
Finance Cost	15	(42,961)	(95,735)
Net Surplus Before Tax		<u>(1,730,753)</u>	<u>6,699,491</u>
Income Tax Expenses	16	(66,106)	(523,310)
Net Surplus for the Year		<u>(1,796,859)</u>	<u>6,176,181</u>
Other Comprehensive Income for the Year		-	-
Total Comprehensive Income for the Year		<u>(1,796,859)</u>	<u>6,176,181</u>

The accounting policies and notes on pages 07 through 20 form an integral part of the Financial Statements.



Donors

CPA's work in 2017 was made possible with the generous support of our donors.

Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI)
Christoffel Blinden Mission (CBM)
Democracy Reporting International (DRI)
East West Management Institute (EWMI)
Embassy of the Republic of Germany
Family Planning Association Sri Lanka (FPASL)
Foundation Open Society Institute (OSF/FOSI)
Friedrich Naumann Stiftung Fur Die Freiheit (FNST)(FNF)
High Commission of Canada
International Foundation For Electoral Systems (IFES)
International Institute for Democracy & Electoral Assistance (IDEA)
International Republican Institute (IRI)
London School of Economics & Political Science (LSE)
Management Systems international (MSI)
National Endowment For Democracy (NED)
Neelan Tiruchelvam Trust (NTT)
Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Office for National Unity and Reconciliation (ONUR)
Open Society Foundations (OSF)
People's Action For Free and Fair Elections (PAFFREL)
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United Nations High commissioner For Refugees (UNHCR)
University of Otago, New Zealand